

SPECIAL FROM NEW YORK

RYM Meets with Police Protection

On Monday, July 7, leaders of the Revolutionary Youth Movement (which walked out of the SDS Convention in June) called an SDS regional conference at NYU's Loeb Student Center. The meeting was billed as a discussion of the convention, but a goon squad at the door asserted that only supporters of certain 'unity principles' including community control of the cops were in SDS. People who wouldn't pledge weren't let in -- that is, PL, WSA and many other SDSers were excluded.

Not only was this sectarian and unprincipled, it was clearly provocative. There are always police in the Loeb Center, which is right off Washington Square where there are many more. Calling a regional conference and then trying to bar half the organization was an open invitation to the cops!

The RYM 'security' squad (only 30 of the 150 inside) tried to bar over 100 SDSers by force. When the 100 began to force their way in, the goon squad retreated behind glass doors and locked them. Shouting 'there is only one SDS', the 100 broke down the thick doors. RYM leaders Bernadine Dohrn and Mark Rudd, standing at a safe distance back from the action, ordered everyone inside to 'break off a chair leg and fight the PL bastards or leave.' Almost no one joined the small force, who turned on a fire hose after the doors had been smashed down. The hose fizzled and the SDSers prepared to charge in. Suddenly, four cops emerged from inside the RYM meeting hall, guns drawn, ordering the SDSers to leave! At the same time, ten squad cars full of tactical police pulled up outside.

After the 100 SDSers were forced off by cops with drawn guns, more than half the RYM meeting walked out in disgust. But Dohrn, Rudd and their followers continued meeting for several hours -- under the armed protection of the NYPD! The cops guarded their meeting, letting no one else in.

This move by RYM - calling an SDS regional meeting but trying to bar SDS, picking a spot where they knew cops could come at once, and then meeting for several hours under the protection of police guns - is an attack on everyone in SDS. The RYMers did this because they can't defend their political theories or practice. Their attempt to keep those they can't defeat politically out of the meeting by force had an effect -- it left many disgusted with SDS. The blame for this falls on RYM.

This practice - along with having everyone swear to a long list of positions to get in - makes clear that RYM wants to build a small, sectarian clique, not a fighting, anti-imperialist movement that serves the people!

